

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-10

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DRAFTED BY EA/LC:MHENDERSON:JY

APPROVED BY S:THE SECRETARY

EA/LC:MR. RIVES

EA:MR. MILLER

D/PW:MR. SIEVERTS

S/S:MR. SPRINGSTEEN

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R 271512Z JAN 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 018457

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, CASC, LA

SUBJECT: AMCIT CHARLES DEAN

REF: VIENTIANE 0155, 0310

1. DELIVER TO HIS EXCELLENCY, PHAGNA PHOUMI VONGVICHIT,
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE
SECRETARY:
BEGIN TEXT:

EXCELLENCY:

WHEN WE MET IN NEW YORK LAST SEPTEMBER IT WAS WITH THE
KNOWLEDGE THAT MR. EMMET KAY, THE CIVILIAN PILOT EMPLOYED
BY CONTINENTAL AIR SERVICES, HAD FINALLY BEEN RELEASED
FROM CAPTIVITY BY THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT.

I DID NOT KNOW AT THAT TIME, NOR PERHAPS DID YOU, THAT
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ANOTHER AMERICAN CIVILIAN HAD ALREADY BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE

BY FORCES OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT. I REFER, OF COURSE, TO CHARLES DEAN, THE 24-YEAR OLD AMERICAN TOURIST WHO WAS DETAINED TOGETHER WITH AN AUSTRALIAN COMPANION, NEIL SHARMAN, ON THE MEKONG RIVER AT PAK HIN BOUN IN EARLY SEPTEMBER.

AS AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE HAS ALREADY INFORMED YOU IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL, IT IS KNOWN THAT MESSRS. DEAN AND SHARMAN WERE MOVED SOON AFTER THEIR DETENTION TO A PRISON CAMP IN THE AREA OF KHAM KEUT, WHERE THEY WERE HELD UNTIL MID-DECEMBER. MOST RECENTLY, THERE HAVE BEEN EYE-WITNESS ACCOUNTS OF THEIR BEING TRANSPORTED ON DECEMBER 14--STILL IN THE CUSTODY OF TROOPS OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT--EASTWARD TOWARD THE BORDER OF THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

I AM INFORMED THAT, DESPITE THE WEALTH OF SPECIFIC INFORMATION WHICH HAS BEEN FURNISHED TO YOU REGARDING THE WHEREABOUTS OF THESE TWO YOUNG MEN, THE ONLY SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE RECEIVED BY THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN VIENTIANE HAS BEEN A DENIAL BY THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT REPRESENTATIVE AT VIENTIANE OF ANY KNOWLEDGE ON THE PART OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT OF THEIR WHEREABOUTS.

I AM AT A LOSS, EXCELLENCY, TO UNDERSTAND THE CONDUCT OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT IN THIS MATTER, I WISH TO UNDERSCORE THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES VIEWS THE CONTINUED DETENTION OF MESSRS. DEAN AND SHARMAN WITH THE UTMOST SERIOUSNESS AND BELIEVES THAT THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE SOLUTION TO THIS MATTER IS THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF BOTH MEN. I SHALL WELCOME YOUR EXCELLENCY'S PROMPT INTERVENTION TO BRING ABOUT SUCH A RESULT.

PLEASE ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGH CONSIDERATION. END TEXT.

2. DELIVER TO HIS HIGHNESS, PRINCE SOUVANNA PHOUMA, PRIME MINISTER, FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY:

BEGIN TEXT:

HIGHNESS:
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AMBASSADOR WHITEHOUSE HAS INFORMED ME OF HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH YOU REGARDING THE YOUNG AMERICAN TOURIST, CHARLES DEAN, WHO WAS DETAINED BY TROOPS OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT IN EARLY SEPTEMBER TOGETHER WITH AN AUSTRALIAN COMPANION, NEIL SHARMAN. I GREATLY APPRECIATE THE INTEREST YOU HAVE DISPLAYED IN THE FATE OF THESE TWO YOUNG MEN.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT HAS NOT YET SEEN FIT TO RELEASE THEM, A STEP WHICH, AS I AM SURE YOUR HIGHNESS WILL AGREE, IS ALREADY LONG OVERDUE.

I WOULD THEREFORE WELCOME YOUR INTERVENTION WITH LEADERS OF THE LAO PATRIOTIC FRONT TO ACHIEVE THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF MESSRS. DEAN AND SHARMAN, A GOAL TO WHICH MY GOVERNMENT ATTACHES GREAT IMPORTANCE.

PLEASE ACCEPT HIGHNESS, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION. END TEXT.

3. AMBASSADOR AUTHORIZED TO TIME DELIVERY MESSAGES AT HIS DISCRETION. KISSINGER

NOTE BY OC/T: DISSEMINATION COORDINATED WITH S/S-O, MR. COVEY 1/27/75.

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